

House Committee on Local Government

January 13, 2009

Testimony for HB 061 sponsored by Representative Jon Sesso

Madam.Chair and Members of the Committee;

For the record my name is Honore Bray and I am the Library Director of the Missoula Public Library. I was also a member of the Fulfillment Task Force for the Montana State Library. The Fulfillment Task Force was given the charge to discuss and recommend to the State Library whether or not to pursue this bill. As you heard from the State Librarian, this same legislation was put forth during the 2007 Legislative Session. The bill was withdrawn when it became obvious that not all libraries were in support of this legislation. Also, as you heard from the State Librarian, the State Library engaged in numerous activities around the state to make sure librarians understood this legislation. As you know, it is difficult to have complete acceptance of any piece of legislation, but the large majority of the librarians who responded to the survey are in support of this legislation.

This legislation proposes a change to the interlibrary loan reimbursement program language that would establish a statewide interlibrary resource-sharing program. This would allow the Montana State Library Commission to administer funds appropriated by the legislature to support and facilitate a broader scope of resource-sharing options among libraries in Montana.

The cost of postage has increased significantly over the past ten years, but unfortunately, library postage budgets have not increased enough to continue sending library materials to other libraries for their patrons to use. Libraries in Montana are dedicated to sharing resources. Libraries can not afford to purchase everything published or do they have room to shelve all the materials so libraries share materials. This is cost effective and also allows Montanans throughout the state to use the materials that they need.

I urge you to vote "Do Pass" on HB 061.

Thank you.

Honore Bray

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